

**Remarks/Arguments**

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

The Examiner has objected to step (d) of claim 1. Applicant has amended step (d) of claim 1 to recite one or more mail pieces to overcome the Examiner's rejection.

Claims 1-19 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC § 103(a) for being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0101147 to Montgomery et. al.

Montgomery discloses the following in paragraph 0184.

"[0184] At step 1204, the postage transaction information, along with the tracking ID's and associated delivery status, is recorded. Specifically, the database management module 1136 stores the postage transaction information in the postage database 1130. At step 1206, the multitude of mail pieces are processed through the postal authority, which in this case, is the USPS. At step 1208, the postal authority, upon delivery of the mail pieces to their intended destination, reads the tracking ID's on the mail pieces. At step 1210, this delivery information is transmitted to and recorded in the master tracking computer system 390. Specifically, the database management module 1178 updates the confirmatory delivery status information in the tracking information database 1172 by changing the status from "accepted" to "delivered."

Montgomery discloses the use of tracking ID's to facilitate the refunding of unused postage. The delivery status for duplicate postage transactions can then be reviewed to determine whether the mail pieces associated with these postage transactions have been delivered.

Montgomery does not disclose or anticipate steps e and g of claim 1 as amended and those claims dependent thereon, namely (e) retrieving the identification code from the data center and the identification code read by the post office and (g) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code.

Applicant's printed postage meter certificate may be used to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code. The certificate then may be used as legal proof that the mail piece was processed by the post. This is important in many

instances where the mailer must prove that a mail piece was sent to a recipient i.e. insurance notices, contractual provisions, other legal notices etc.

Currently the mailer has to go to the post to obtain a physical certificate that the post processed the mail piece. In applicants claimed invention the physical certificate may be obtained by the mailer without going to the post. The post is not open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Thus, mailers would be able to obtain proof of mailing every hour of the day and seven days a week.

In view of the above claims 1-3, 5-19 and new claims 20-21 are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions would the Examiner please call the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Please charge any additional fees that may be required or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 16-1885.

Respectfully submitted,

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